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ART. XXVI.—*Address, delivered at the Fourth Anniversary of the Massachusetts Peace Society, December 25, 1819. By John Gallison, Esq. Cambridge, Hilliard and Metcalf.*

WE propose to say more of the author of this address, than of the address itself; to which we are induced, by the consideration, that his conduct through life may be useful as an example, and because his character is worthy of being exhibited as a model. It is also more especially due from us not to take silent leave of him, as he was one of our number, and his death is a loss common to the contributors to this journal and its readers.

The events of Mr. Gallison's life were not striking, and only a few of them need to be mentioned,—for the purpose of making a short notice of his character more intelligible. He was born at Marblehead, October 1788. His mother, who was sister of the late Chief Justice Sewall, survived his birth but a few hours. His father has lived to experience one of the greatest calamities of age, in the death of a dutiful, affectionate, beloved, and honoured son. Young Gallison was, at an early age, put under the instruction of the Rev. Dr. Harris, now president of Columbia College. He was admitted into Cambridge University at the age of fifteen, where he remained till the spring of 1807, when with many others, he quitted that institution without a degree, on account of a dissatisfaction in regard to its administration, which prevailed pretty generally among the students at the time. Notwithstanding his thus dissolving his connexions with it, the university a few years since, conferred upon him the degree of A. M. On leaving Cambridge, he began the study of the law in Boston, in the office of the Hon. J. Q. Adams. He afterwards pursued his studies in the office of Judge Story, who was then in practice at Salem. On being admitted to the bar, he commenced the practice of his profession in his native town; but, by the advice of his friends, he soon removed to Boston, where he resided and continued to grow in honour esteem, and usefulness, till the time of his death, which took place in December last, a short time after he had completed the thirty second year of his age.

His life was a short one, but he improved it so well, that he is remembered for what he accomplished, as well as regretted for what was expected of him. He had become

known to many, and was regarded with respect by all who knew him, and with a warm affection by all who knew him intimately. He was formed to gain the opinions and good will of men. He was kind and sincere in his disposition ; nature seemed to have shed virtuous influences upon him, and generous sentiments and honourable principles sprung up in his mind spontaneously.

His faculties always readily inclined to his duties. In his childhood and youth he needed not to be bidden to his tasks. Those who remember him well, while he was the pupil of Dr. Harris, say that he was then as remarkable for the correct and punctual performance of his school exercises, as he always was afterwards for doing, faithfully, and thoroughly, whatever he undertook. Nor was this from a passive submission to an order, or a mechanical adherence to a rule prescribed by himself or others ; he was moved by a strong and active principle of duty, not that of obedience merely, but that which arises from a lively sense of moral obligation, and an habitual feeling of what one owes to himself and others. He had, besides, a love and admiration of order, and propriety, and completeness, in so much, that it is not easy to name a thing, though of small importance, which he ever did, carelessly or superficially.

His perceptions, and tastes, and desire of knowledge, were not confined to a few objects, nor yet were they too diversified. He did not fall into the error of which there are so many examples, in men who dissipate their faculties in multifarious and inconsequential attempts, hurrying from their proposed ends, the moment they have overcome the first obstacles, to waste their endeavours again upon something else, and so never finishing any thing, or accomplishing themselves in any particular course of action. Gallison persevered in his pursuits, and never allowed himself to believe a thing to be impossible. As an example of this ; soon after being matriculated at Cambridge, he resolved to study his historical exercises, in the French, of which language he had little or no knowledge. Though an acquaintance with history cannot but be considered requisite to every scholar, by all the members of any literary institution, yet at that time the prescribed exercises in this study were made small account of by the students, who hardly considered the reputation of excelling in them, to be worth coveting. But notwithstanding the little

estimation, in which Millot, the author then studied, was held, and the little reputation to be gained by this study, and, above all, the sympathy which the young especially feel with companions who are idle and amusing themselves, Gallison, with this object in view, continued, without intermission, to encounter all the difficulties of the French, till he made himself master of the language.

But though he never lost sight of his purposes, or abandoned them, this did not prevent his occasionally relaxing from his pursuits; and to be social, and on occasions convivial, was to him an indulgence and not an effort. He was at times animated to a pleasantry of mind and manner, which at other times seemed foreign to him. With him, however, as with all, the buoyancy of the spirits, and the promptness of the mind to put away its cares, gradually subsided before increasing responsibility and labours, and during the latter part of his life, there was in his habitual looks and manners some token of his employments.

He was among the first of his class at the university, where he was particularly distinguished in the classical studies. His habits of application attended him in the study of his profession, and with the same success: so that when he came to Boston to establish himself, he brought with him the reputation of being one of the best read lawyers of his standing. But many have experienced, and all observed, that to be a successful or a good practiser, is not a necessary consequence of being a learned lawyer. This is not because any man can know too much of his business, whether his knowledge exists in his understanding as science, or consists only of what he remembers, as so many independent facts. When we say a man is too learned, or too scientific, to be practical, we are apt to impose on ourselves, as if his knowledge were necessarily a hindrance. A general cannot have too great supplies of arms and munitions at his command, but if he will never take up his march, without moving the whole, he will make slow progress. He shows his want of good sense, which he would do in some other way if he could not in this. Some men can never disencumber themselves of principles and precedents; this is not because they have too many, but because they have not skill in applying them; in fine, they either do not thoroughly understand what they remember, or

they are too indolent and indifferent to make a right use of their knowledge.

The time, therefore, when a young man puts his practical talents to the test, and undertakes to turn his attainments to account, is trying, not merely because he supposes his future fortunes to depend on the result, but also because he, at the same time, subjects his reputation, and his opinion of himself, to a severe experiment. He doubts how far he deserves to succeed ; and then he finds the ground occupied by a thousand competitors ; many having a fair advantage over him, and others ready to take any advantage. Or if he feels an assurance of his qualifications, and does not fear a trial, still he is sensible of being too much at the mercy of other men and of events. If he deserve well, he must content himself with the barren satisfaction of doing so, unless circumstances or friends supply opportunities. These are reflections made by every man, when he is about to determine whether all his hopes have been dreams ; and they are apt to sink most deep, in the minds that aspire the highest. Gallison was not free from them ; he often expressed them to a friend with whom he was intimate during the early part of his practice. Though he was not wont to solicit his imagination for frightful images, he was yet a prudent man and inclined to be sufficiently, perhaps too much, concerned for the future. It was natural, accordingly, that he should not have been free from anxiety, in circumstances, under which to have been so, would have argued insensibility. Yet few young men in fact begin under more favourable circumstances. His talents were well adapted to his profession, and he had been indefatigable in initiating himself, and he had friends ready to give him their support. A young man's success does not often depend more entirely on himself, and no one could be less likely to be wanting to himself. On coming to Boston, he proposed to rely wholly on his industry and talents for support. He accordingly observed the strictest economy in his expenses, which he could easily do, as he had no pleasures, vices, or follies, to provide for, and though like every man of a liberal mind, he had tastes which he would have willingly gratified, and the indulgence of which involve expense, yet none of them had such an ascendancy, as to push him beyond his circumstances. He was one of the most fortunate of men in his moral constitution ; it is rare to see

one whose habits, inclinations, and tastes, adapt themselves to his situation with such docility. He thus made the claims upon the fruits of his industry as light as he could, yet he did not the more remit his efforts to meet them.

He was regular in his attention to his business, and scrupulously careful to do well, and in time, whatever was committed to him. Though he did not abandon research and general reading, yet he was present and vigilant in his practice, and did not neglect what lay by him to be executed, to lose himself in remote speculations. He had a happy talent of possessing himself readily and easily of the forms of business, of which every one, notwithstanding all the preparation he can make, will, necessarily, have much to learn, at the time he has occasion for their use. He took care to investigate, and satisfy himself upon, every question that occurred in his practice, whether of great or little importance. He seemed to have almost the same interest in examining a case proposed to him as one entrusted to him, and all those of the same standing, or younger, resorted to him for his opinion, more than to any one of his age, both because they had great confidence in his learning and judgment, and also, because he was accessible and ready to take an interest in the inquiry. It continued to be so, more or less, during his life, but of course he was less able to lend himself to the concerns of others, as his own became more numerous, and pressing.

With the income from his profession, and some small supplements to it, he just defrayed his expenses during the two first years of his practice, which was no inconsiderable success, both in business and economy. At the end of that time, he undertook the conduct of a newspaper, the *Weekly Messenger*, on a stated salary from the proprietors, which, with the growing profits of his business, made him as easy and independent in his circumstances, as he could be, and removed one cause of anxiety, by which he seems, before, to have been sometimes a little depressed. He continued to conduct the *Messenger* a year and a half, and, during this period, he began to take notes for his reports of Judge Story's decisions. Both as an editor and a reporter, he showed his usual industry, ability, and accuracy; the proofs of which are in possession of the public. But he did not permit his labours, in either of these characters, to interfere with his pro-

fessional engagements, nor do these avocations seem to have given his employers any apprehension that their affairs would be neglected.

His attendance in the Circuit Court gave him an opportunity of perfecting himself in practice, and being present at so many important trials, before so able and learned a judge, he could not but make great accessions to his legal acquirements, and, what was of equal importance, he acquired skill in analyzing and interpreting the principles with which his mind was stored, and applying them to persons and facts. By reporting, he also attained, more perfectly, the art of ascertaining and arranging evidence, in which he afterwards excelled.

About the beginning of 1816, he formed a connexion in business with Mr. Prescott, which opened to him a wide field of experience, in a great proportion of the most important and difficult cases disputed at the time. And the opportunity of a free professional intercourse, and, in many things, community of pursuit, with so eminent a lawyer, was not among the smallest advantages of the connexion. Mr. Gallison was not a man to neglect availing himself of such advantages. He was accordingly, on Mr. Prescott's consenting to accept the office of judge, about two years afterwards, able to take a very respectable rank at the bar, in which he maintained himself with steadiness, and from which he gradually rose during the rest of his life.

At the time of his death, he had been in the practice but ten years, in which period he had rendered himself a skilful conveyancer, and was of course well versed in the titles of real estate, and had become a correct, scientific, special pleader; attainments, which those only will think slightly of, who are ignorant of the labour and talents requisite to them. He did not possess, in a very eminent degree, the talent which usually characterises the greatest advocates; that of putting a subject in a strong and irresistible light; nor was he peculiarly distinguished by the power of originally and intuitively perceiving things in all their relations and consequences; nor had he a remarkable rapidity and dexterity in making combinations. But he was prudent, vigilant, patient, and indefatigable. He omitted nothing, and slighted nothing. In conducting a cause in court, or transacting an affair out of it, he was sure to consider the subject from every point of

view, and bring to it whatever research, and a sound and comprehensive judgment, could supply. There was nothing unusually brilliant and astonishing in his performances, but every body was perfectly satisfied. The very appearance of labour no doubt contributed, in some measure, to his success, and had he done equally well, without any sign of labour, it would have inspired less general confidence; for he made the impression that he applied himself indefatigably to what was committed to him; and whatever confidence was inspired at a distance, was never diminished on approach. Those who ever had confided their interests to him, were not apt to leave him. On the contrary, they came to acquiesce entirely in his opinions and conduct, and relied so much upon his qualifications and integrity, that they were disposed to think whatever he did was right.

We have said too much, perhaps, of Mr. Gallison's professional character. Though he was, for his age, a distinguished lawyer, this was but a part of his merit. He loved liberal pursuits, and sought to enrich his mind with good knowledge. His professional studies and employments did not leave him much time, but this he devoted to the best books on useful subjects, and to the society of those who could repay the instruction and pleasure he imparted. The public has some of the fruits of his study, scattered in the different numbers of this journal. The most elaborate articles furnished by him are the review of *Bristed's Resources of the United States* in September 1818; the article on the *Prevention of Crimes* in September 1819; that on the *Admission of Confessions in Evidence* in April 1820; and that on *Privateering* in July of the same year. Besides his contributions to this work he published, in 1820, the address, the title of which is prefixed to this article. The style in them all is correct and simple, and such as was altogether suitable to his character. The articles on the *Prevention of Crimes*, and *Privateering*, are examples of the investigation he was in the habit of making, when it was requisite; of his ardent zeal to promote the great interests of society; and of his benevolence, which, in him, was more a passion, than a mere disposition, and constituted one of his strongest and most characteristic principles of action. All his productions wear striking marks of sound and just thinking.

The views of christianity and the pious sentiments intro-

duced into his address before the Peace Society, were not adopted for the occasion. They were opinions and feelings, that were fixed in his character, and with which his conduct was imbued. It was easy to see that his actions were regulated by the most pure and severe moral principles, and still he was of so good a nature, that he did not judge of others harshly, nor hate them for their faults. He seemed incapable of indulging a bad passion, and had no envy or selfishness, to be gratified by the follies or vices of other men. He very regularly attended public worship, with the congregation of the Rev. Dr. Channing, whom he regarded with the greatest respect and admiration, and to whom he was attached by mutual and intimate friendship. He looked forward to the recurrence of the public ministrations of his religious instructor and friend, with expectation and enthusiasm, and spoke of them, afterwards, with the manner of one alluding to what has produced in his mind strong and elevated emotions. It grieved him, if any intimate friend, from difference of religious opinion, did not fully sympathize with him in this respect.

Mr. Gallison was, in every respect, a practical man, and consistent with himself. Whatever sentiments he felt or expressed, he carried into his conduct, and uniformly acted up to. There was a perfect order, proportion, and correspondence in his principles and actions, so that, as the parts were less striking, the whole was more admirable, and though we may often see this or that, of his talents and virtues, in another, we can seldom find them combined.

He was simple and direct in his purpose, and utterly a stranger to every thing like artifice or duplicity. We would not, however, be understood to say that he was a man of great simplicity of character, in the usual sense of the phrase. He was not easily deceived, and had no excessive vanity or other weakness, that the designing could take advantage of; and though his curiosity did not lead him away in quest of things foreign to him, yet he was sufficiently regardful of what concerned him. To others, he was strictly just and honourable, and not only did not encroach upon their rights, or willingly interfere with them, but was so plainly without any inclination to do so, that they had no apprehension of it; on the contrary they cheerfully conceded what was due to him, and rejoiced, instead of being envious, at all his

successes. At the same time he understood and pursued his own true interest, with a prudent assiduity. He was ambitious of a substantial and durable reputation, pursued with honourable views, and earned by useful labours. He knew how much the opinion of others necessarily affects the internal satisfaction of every man, and the external welfare of most men. But he did not mistake notoriety for reputation; he never appeared merely to be seen, or courted the transient admiration that passes with levity from object to object. He desired, and he obtained, a place in the good wishes and good opinion of worthy men,—that grateful and secure reputation, which is a real good; which exalts a man while he lives, and makes him willing to be remembered.

It is generally supposed that Mr. Gallison's life was shortened by his too intense application, though there seems to be some unwillingness to express this, lest it should be a discouragement to industry. But there is no great consequence to be apprehended from supplying a fact, more or less, to those who do as they are inclined, not because they themselves think they have sufficient reasons; they only justify what they are determined on, with such arguments as they can. Mr. Gallison did not stretch his faculties with more intensity, than have a thousand others, who, after all, have gradually decayed in a healthful old age. Of those who have been distinguished during the last fifty years, for their services to mankind, very many are now living, and descending to the goal, by an easy decline from a long course. Yet few of them have been born with their greatness, or found it offered for assuming it. They have toiled while others have slept, and thought while others have been vacant. If there are, then, instances of those who sink under their labours, there are others of those who are strengthened by them. But at the worst, the event of exertions towards laudable ends, is rather an incentive, than a discouragement to others. Suppose a man to be exhausted by his labours at the age of thirty two, as was Mr. Gallison, or earlier, as many have been; still it is a good to have done something, or even to have attempted something, with a reasonable prospect and means of success. The event in itself, or compared with what was hoped for, is a great calamity—it is so to the party himself, for when he has been long working, with a view to remote results, laying foundations with solitary in-

dustry, and the superstructure begins to rise under his hands, he is suddenly swept off, and his eyes are not to see the beauty and use which his mind had conceived. It is most generally a still greater calamity to his friends; for they lived in him, perhaps, and since he is gone, the sources of existence seem to be dried, and to their sight things have faded and are withered. It is a misfortune to other men, who feel the absence of any one, who could really help to move on the ponderous wheels of society. In him they had much, or hoped much, and they seem to have lost as much what they hoped for, as what they possessed. Hence a young man is more regretted than an old one, who was equally useful, and as much beloved. Others are not prepared for the loss, and cannot persuade themselves to resign, what they were so sure of continuing to enjoy. His death seems to defeat the purpose of nature, and disturb the just order of things. Still, if the loss must be sustained, no one could wish it should be less. It is more desirable to die in the midst of one's enterprises, and to leave designs as yet executed only in the rudiments, than to have lived but for the day. To men of a generous mind, it is an evil to live only for themselves, and for the present, and to die without being missed; and it is some satisfaction to one, to know that he shall be remembered, and regretted, for the expectations he has raised, if not for those he has gratified. But very few are, in fact, limited to this satisfaction; those, only, who pass away in their very youth, and whose intellect is blighted in the germ. Though one may not survive early manhood, and may only have begun to execute the great plan of his life, still he is constantly finishing some subordinate part, and has the satisfaction of completing something, and the certainty of leaving some monuments of himself. Few persons are fitted for an Epicurean existence, and formed merely to view at a distance, as indifferent spectators, the struggles of others, or to expect, in tranquillity, the sensations that the senses may awaken, and the amusements that an idle fancy may offer. To most men it is necessary to look beyond the present; to hope, and to fear, and be impelled by the passions. If they reflect and reason at all, they cannot but see, that all the motives are on the side of action, and that it is better to press on in the pursuit, even of what is very improbable, than to stand idle. To

such, the example of one who may have prostrated his faculties, and crushed his being, in generous endeayours, is an argument for activity, and a model, rather than a warning.

When we say that the death of such a man as Mr. Gallison is a misfortune to himself, we speak of it only as a termination of his life, and the extinguishment of his fair hopes in the world. But considered as a transition, and an event in his existence, it must be felicitous, and others should, for his sake, be reconciled to it. If exalted principles, piety, generous exertions for the general good, and that of each one; and a conscientious observance of the laws men acknowledge for the thoughts, the passions, and conduct; if, in fine, dispositions and virtues, have influence upon future welfare, such a man must succeed to hopes greater than those he leaves, and when the curtain of darkness is withdrawn, his eyes must open on a prospect more glorious than that which had disappeared.



NOTE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

\* \* A communication on the third article of the declaration of rights, alluded to at the beginning of Art. XVIII, an article on Florida, and a review of the translation of Pothier's treatise on Maritime Contracts' have been necessarily omitted in this number of the N. A. Review.